

May 15, 2014

To: House Local Government Committee

From: Elena Palombo, Government Relations Manager - Michigan Association of Broadcasters

Re: Support HB 5560

### **Michigan Association of Broadcasters Supports House Bill 5560**

The Michigan Association of Broadcasters appreciates the committee's hard work on HB 5560 – it results in good public policy of open access, government transparency, and creates options for those who provide public notices that fits their individual community's needs.

Current Michigan public notice requirements are antiquated laws without vendor or marketplace competitive pressures. Many of the public notice laws were established when printed newspapers were the only public media available.

The cost of public notices is determined by a monopolistic and outdated business model that often comes from a single source provider. Many markets no longer even have daily newspapers and many newspapers charge a subscription fee to access their websites. As a result, millions of dollars of taxpayers' money are paid at all levels of government each year on public notices that reach a declining number of individuals.

Technology changed the way people access information. We now use multiple media platforms in finding information we need. House Bill 5560 recognizes this and provides alternative publication methods that are cost-effective and technologically advanced.

MAB believes that public notices should be published in a media for which there is **no charge** to the consumer to obtain. We believe that local TV and radio stations, and their websites, offer a competitive choice in the public notice distribution process that includes daily on-air promotion of the public notice to build the audience for the notices and promote transparency.

More people spend time with radio and television daily than all other forms of media combined. According to a Nielsen report published in February 2014, 242 million Americans listen to radio. This represents 92% of the adult population in the United States. According to the same report, television remains the number one media platform for video consumption, with 97.2% of Americans turning to TV for their local news, programming, entertainment and emergency notification. On average we spend 4+ hours per day watching television.

Broadcasters' websites are proven to be among the most popular for breaking news, weather, school closings, emergency information, and other reports. These websites are continuously updated, available 24/7 and are always free to our citizens. Additionally, broadcasters already adhere to the strict reporting and archiving requirements, mandated by the Federal Communication Commission, and are well positioned to serve as repositories for public notices.

HB 5560 recognizes the value of the local broadcasters and their websites to public notice distribution. No longer does one media appeal to all consumers. It is time for healthy competition for the public notices. Michigan Association of Broadcasters believes that radio and television media companies with their websites, mobile apps, texting programs and social media platforms are well suited to publish and promote public notices.